

Andy Colborn Tried To Sue Buting, Strang And John Ferak

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John Ferak

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Politics & Government

For purposes of this case, I have agreed not to assert that "Making a Murderer" caused my divorce, Andy Colborn declared under oath in July.

John Ferak, Patch Staff

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Millions of people across the globe became familiar with Andy Colborn and his former mentor, Manitowoc County Sheriff's Lt. Detective James Lenk, from the award-winning Netflix documentary, "Making a Murderer." (File image/John Ferak/Wrecking Crew author)



MANITOWOC, WI —Manitowoc County Sheriff's Detective Andy Colborn's federal lawsuit against Netflix and its award-winning docu-series, "Making A Murderer," includes sworn testimony Colborn gave this summer, conceding Netflix did not cause his marriage to collapse, and that he has lost "no income due to Making A Murderer."

"Making a Murderer did not cause Ms. Maurer to avoid romantic involvement with me," Colborn declared in a sworn statement from July 21. "My relationship with Ms. Maurer harmed my relationship with my ex-wife, Ms. Colborn.

"My relationship with Ms. Maurer also harmed my relationship with my adult children," newly filed federal court records from Colborn's lawsuit against Netflix revealed.

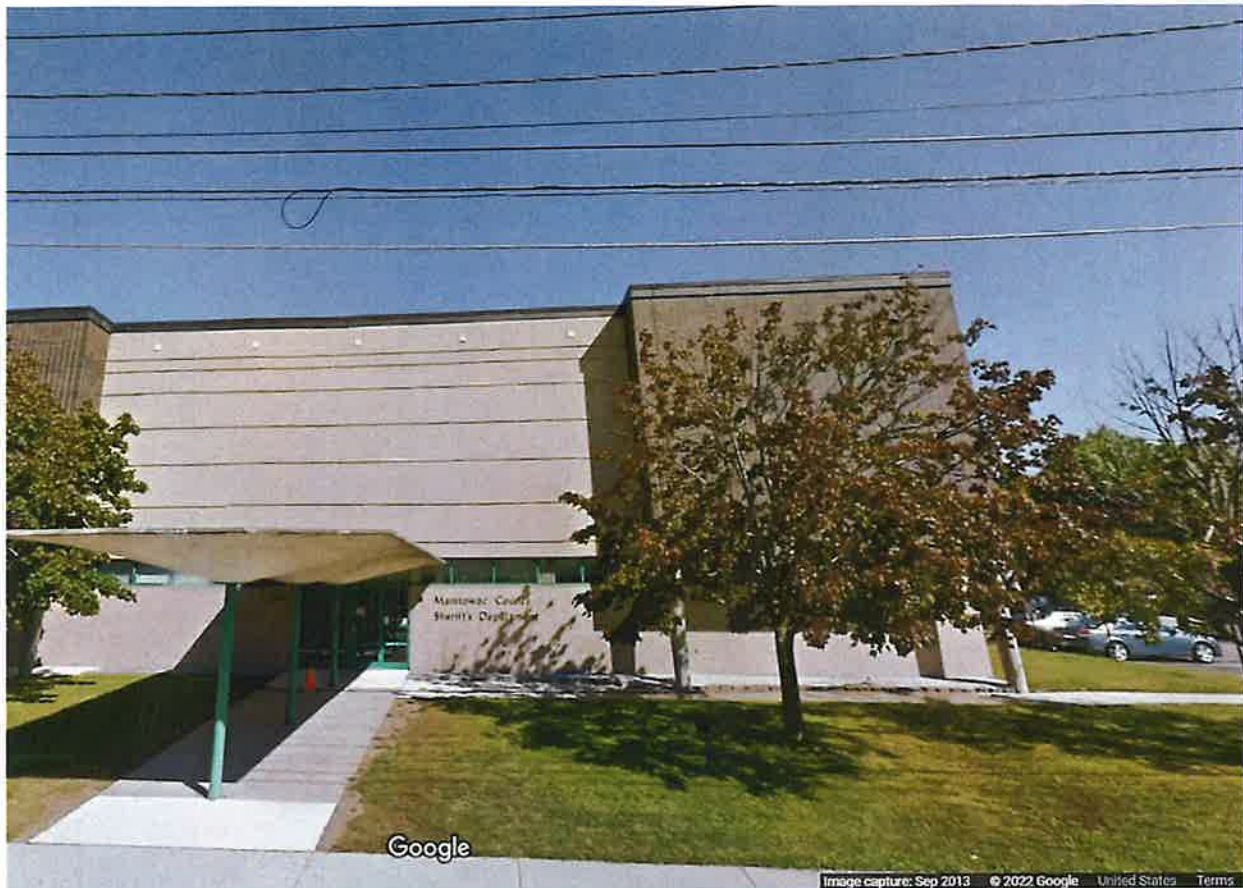
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Colborn stated in the court filings that his divorce became final this February.

"For purposes of this case, I have agreed not to assert that 'Making a Murderer' caused my divorce," Colborn testified. "I had a romantic relationship with Jodi Maurer prior to my divorce from Ms. Colborn.

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"I moved out of the residence that I shared with Ms. Colborn in January 2021. I moved back into the residence in March 2021. I began living with Ms. Maurer at a shared residence in April 2021."



After Making A Murderer's Netflix release, Manitowoc County's Sheriff's Office became one of the most hated police agencies. Image via Google Maps

In 2018, the Manitowoc County Sheriff's lieutenant who was at the center of widespread evidence planting and police misconduct allegations in the Oct. 31, 2005 Teresa Halbach murder investigation against Steven Avery, retired from the law enforcement profession.

Millions of people across the globe became familiar with Colborn and his former mentor, Manitowoc County Sheriff's Lt. Detective James Lenk, from the award-winning Netflix documentary, "Making a Murderer."

In 2018, Colborn informed Manitowoc resident Debi Hochstetler that he just retired and was no longer in charge of her son's still-unsolved January 1999 hit-and-run fatality.

Her son, Manitowoc high school student Ricky Hochstetler, was run over and killed by a suspected drunk driver while Ricky was walking home during a snowstorm. The fatality happened around bar-closing time in rural Manitowoc, but it immediately turned into a cold-case at the Manitowoc County Sheriff's Department and there have been long-standing suspicions that the Ricky Hochstetler crime and the cover-up involved other members of the Manitowoc County Sheriff's Department including several of Colborn's eventual supervisors.



"Making a Murderer 2" is essentially three powerful stories rolled into one very powerful documentary.
File/John Ferak

In addition to the sworn statements about his divorce, Colborn gave testimony about his previous intentions to sue Steven Avery's criminal defense trial lawyers Dean Strang and Jerry Buting.

Besides them, Colborn wanted to file a defamation lawsuit against this article's author, John Ferak, who was an investigative journalist for the USA Today Wisconsin Network when Making A Murderer debuted in December 2015.

In 2018, Ferak published "Wrecking Crew: Demolishing The Case Against Steven Avery." The true-crime book was harshly critical of Colborn, revealing how Colborn went from being a Wisconsin auto mechanic to the eventual head of the detective unit, working the administrations of Manitowoc County Sheriffs Tom Kocourek, Kenny Petersen and Rob Hermann.

A person familiar with the Colborn's Netflix case said that the statute of limitations for Colborn to file a defamation lawsuit against Strang, Buting or Ferak has now expired. He apparently approached to several lawyers, but none of them agreed to take the case.

According to this summer's lawsuit stipulations, the following statements have been entered into the court record for Colborn's pending lawsuit against Netflix:

- "I believe that Jerome Buting has damaged my reputation in out-of-court statements about me that were made after the release of Making a Murderer."
- "At one point, Mr. Colborn wanted to sue Mr. Buting for defamation."
- "At one point, Mr. Colborn wanted to sue Mr. Strang for defamation."
- "Mr. Colborn believes John Ferak has damaged his reputation."
- "At one point, Mr. Colborn wanted to sue Mr. Ferak for defamation."
- "Mr. Colborn has not watched Making a Murderer in its entirety."
- "Mr. Colborn is voluntarily participating in a documentary tentatively called Convicting a Murderer, which has not yet been released to the public."
- "Mr. Colborn voluntarily retired in 2018. Mr. Colborn had a retirement party."

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE
EASTERN DISTRICT OF WISCONSIN
MILWAUKEE DIVISION**

ANDREW L. COLBORN,

Plaintiff,

vs.

**NETFLIX, INC.; CHROME MEDIA
LLC, F/K/A SYNTHESIS FILMS, LLC;
LAURA RICCIARDI; AND MOIRA
DEMOS,**

Defendants.

Civil No.: 19-CV-484-BHL

- "Since his retirement, Mr. Colborn decided to return to the workforce and was able to find new employment."
- "Mr. Colborn filed for divorce from his now-ex-wife Barb Colborn in March 2021."
- "Mr. Colborn's divorce from Ms. Colborn was finalized in February 2022."

Why Colborn Wanted To Sue Avery's Lawyers

"Mr. Colborn felt that defense theories involving the possibility that Steven Avery may have been framed for the murder of Teresa Halbach were ludicrous," July's court stipulations outlined. "He also thought that he was not being fairly portrayed by defense attorneys at Mr. Avery's trial."

"Mr. Colborn acknowledged in response to examination at the Avery criminal trial that the trial was the first time that he felt that his integrity as a law enforcement officer had been questioned."

Colborn also indicated he was told "Making A Murderer" would be a "hatchet job" and "not portray him in a favorable light."

- 55. Mr. Colborn's divorce from Ms. Colborn was finalized in February 2022.
- 56. *Making a Murderer* did not cause Mr. Colborn's divorce.
- 57. Mr. Colborn had an affair with Jodi Maurer while married to Ms. Colborn.
- 58. After filing for divorce from Ms. Colborn, Mr. Colborn moved out of the residence he shared with Ms. Colborn.
- 59. Mr. Colborn immediately began living together with Ms. Maurer at a shared residence.
- 60. *Making a Murderer* did not cause Ms. Maurer to avoid romantic entanglement with Mr. Colborn.
- 61. Mr. Colborn's infidelity irreparably harmed his relationship with his ex-wife, Ms. Colborn.
- 62. Mr. Colborn's infidelity also harmed his relationship with his adult children.



"Mr. Colborn believes that Jerome Buting has damaged his reputation in out-of-court statements about Mr. Colborn that were made after the release of *Making a Murderer*," court records reveal. "Mr. Colborn believes that Dean Strang has damaged his reputation in out-of-court statements about Mr. Colborn that were made after the release of *Making a Murderer*."

46. Mr. Colborn's faith community supported him after the release of *Making a Murderer*.
47. No one has confronted Mr. Colborn as a result of *Making a Murderer*.
48. Mr. Colborn voluntarily retired in 2018.
49. In 2016, Mr. Colborn was already preparing to retire from the Manitowoc County Sheriff's Office in no more than three years.
50. Mr. Colborn had a retirement party.
51. Upon announcing his retirement, Mr. Colborn received supportive calls from dozens of people.
52. Since his retirement, Mr. Colborn decided to return to the workforce and was able to find new employment.
53. Mr. Colborn has not lost income due to *Making a Murderer*.

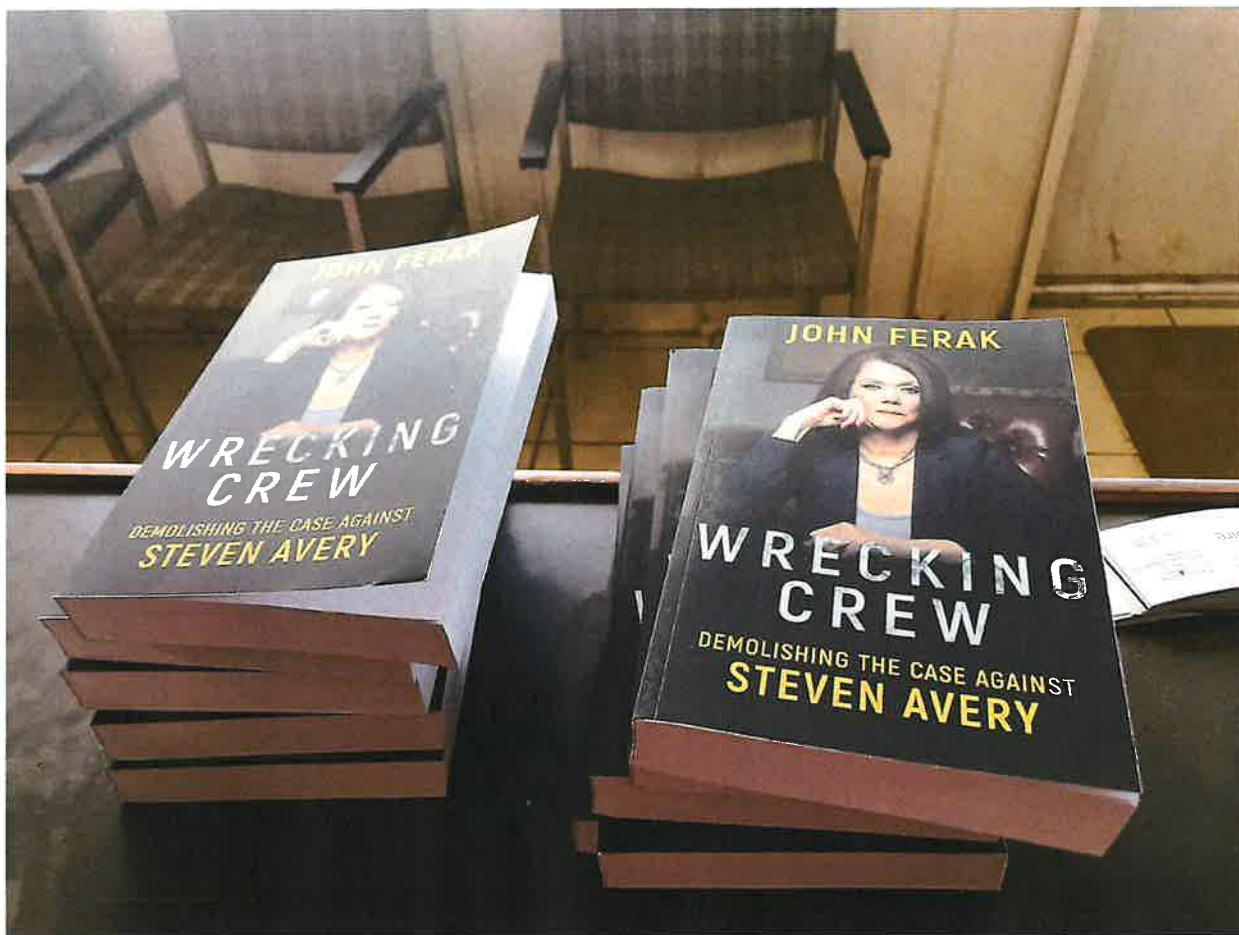
Past Andy Colborn Coverage:

[Avery lawsuit video: Sgt. Andrew Colborn](#)

[Lt. Colborn Rips John Ferak's Reporting On Steven Avery](#)

['Making A Murderer' Manitowoc County Deputy Colborn Retires](#)

[At Manitowoc, glowing job reviews norm, not exception in sheriff's command staff](#)



In 2018, Ferak published "Wrecking Crew: Demolishing The Case Against Steven Avery." File/John Ferak

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